It was a pleasure seeing many of you at the Triple-I convention this weekend. I always enjoy meeting new friends and seeing familiar faces and am already looking forward to the next opportunity we have to do this again.

The Illinois State Board of Education is joining with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police, Illinois Liquor Control Commission and the Ford Motor Company Fund in a new statewide initiative to try and reduce teen car crashes and fatalities. The Operation Teen Safe Driving program is the first of its kind in the nation to directly engage high school students in a competition to design community-based driving safety programs targeted at teens.

Under the innovative program, both public and private high schools will compete with each other in devising creative and attention-getting strategies designed to develop and implement community-based strategies to reduce fatalities and injuries resulting from traffic crashes involving teens. Participating schools will be asked to identify major teen traffic safety problems in their communities and to propose creative solutions to address them.

Both nationally and here in Illinois, teens make up about 7% of the driving population but are involved in roughly 20% of traffic crashes and more than 12% of traffic fatalities. While Illinois has had great success in reducing the overall number of fatalities since 2003 (in 2006 the overall fatality number fell to its lowest since 1924), the number of teen fatalities has remained virtually unchanged in that same time period.

This effort is modeled on a successful campaign undertaken by IDOT and Ford in Tazewell County after 15 teens were killed in traffic accidents during 2005 and 2006. During that campaign, all seven Tazewell County high schools participated, and each school received $3,000 in seed money to develop comprehensive safe driving programs for teens. Since the effort was launched in July 2006, there have been no teen traffic fatalities in Tazewell County.

The “winning” programs will be selected based upon each school’s effectiveness in identifying and creatively addressing a problem and the program’s ability to reach teens and the entire community.

High schools that come up with the most creative solutions will be invited to participate in three Ford-sponsored “Ride and Drive” safe-driving clinics in Chicago, Springfield and the Metro East area. These “Ride and Drive” events last three days and feature professional drivers taking teens through rigorous behind-the-wheel driving exercises, including hazard recognition/accident avoidance, vehicle handling/skid control and speed/space management.

IDOT is inviting all public and private high schools in the state to participate in this program. Principals and driving instructors should have received an invitation earlier this month, and you can access more information about the program at www.buckleupillinois.org. I would encourage all of you to consider participating in this new program because if it saves just one of our students’ lives, it’s well worth the effort.
Upcoming Deadlines

- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – School District/Architects training at Kane ROE – November 27, 2007
- **Health/Life Safety Processing System Training** – School District/Architects training at Kane ROE – November 28, 2007
- **NCLB FY08 Title I Comparability analysis** – November 30, 2007
- **NCLB FY08 Monitoring Instrument** – November 30, 2007

Rules & Waivers

**Invitation to Comment on Rules**

Three proposed rulemakings recently reviewed by the State Board of Education are currently available for public comment. These items have been posted on the agency’s web site at [www.isbe.net/rules](http://www.isbe.net/rules); choose “Proposed Rules and Amendments”. Please submit any comments or suggestions you may have to rules@isbe.net.

- **Part 51 (Dismissal of Tenured Teachers Under Article 24 and Dismissal of Tenured Teachers and Principals Under Article 34 of the School Code)**
  A technical update acknowledging the effects of P.A. 95-510, which permits an alternative evaluation plan to be agreed upon by the Chicago Board of Education and the exclusive representative of the district’s teachers.

**Deadline for Public Comment: January 14, 2008**

- **Part 226 (Special Education)**
  Technical updates to three Sections, made necessary by recent legislation.
  **Deadline for Public Comment: January 14, 2008**

- **Part 350 (Secular Textbook Loan)**
  Revisions to reference electronic means of communication in connection with the acquisition and disposal of loaned textbooks.
  **Deadline for Public Comment: January 14, 2008**

**Nutrition**

**School Food Service Forum Wrap-up**

Three School Food Service Forums were held in late October and early November 2007. Thank you to more
than 125 people who attended and shared thoughts on the food and beverage requirements set forth in the current rules and the School Wellness Policy Task Force Report. Thank you also to those who provided written comments. As we look forward to a possible revision of the School Food Service Rules Part 305, Nutrition Programs Division staff will review all comments. Materials will be presented to the Illinois State Board of Education in the near future for their consideration. Please watch our website (www.isbe.net/nutrition) for announcements of the next steps.

November 30, Due Date to submit application for Dairy Council’s 2007 Breakfast Award

The November 30 due date to apply for the 2007 Breakfast Awards, sponsored by the Midwest Dairy Council and the St. Louis District Dairy Council is approaching. The award recognizes Illinois schools that are bringing breakfast to students in creative ways with great results. Contact your local Dairy Council representative; in Northern Illinois visit Midwest Dairy Council’s website at www.midwestdairy.com, or in Central and Southern Illinois visit the St. Louis District Dairy Council’s website at www.stldairycouncil.org.

$3,500 School Breakfast Start-Up Grants Available. Apply Online Today!

School Breakfast Start-Up Grants are available up to $3,500 to begin a school breakfast program. Visit http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/breakfast_state.htm to download the simple application. Do not delay, apply today.

Legal

Driver Education Enrollment Guidance

Comprehensive changes concerning the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program will go into effect on January 1, 2008 as Public Act 95-0310 will be enacted. One of the provisions of the new law extends the instruction permit phase from three months to nine months. This change has prompted questions as to how the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) defines “enrolled” in the context of the Illinois vehicle code, which requires that a student be “enrolled in an approved driver education course,” in addition to other requirements in the statute specific to a student’s age and/or what approved driver education course they are enrolling in, in order be eligible for a drivers permit [625 ILCS 5/6-103]. The Illinois Secretary of State (ISOS) is honoring all instruction permits which are issued prior to January 1, 2008 under the current three month permit phase. For students that will take Driver Education after January 1, some school districts are taking the position that once the student has registered for Driver Education, they are enrolled, even if they are not beginning instruction until after January 1. ISBE has taken the position that for purposes of Driver’s Education, enrolled and registered are synonymous.

Privacy Guidance

On October 30, Secretary Spellings joined Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez and Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff at a high school in suburban Virginia to announce the availability of three new brochures that present guidance on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In the wake of the Virginia Tech University shootings, these brochures -- one for K-12 officials, one for higher education officials, and one for parents -- seek to empower schools to better balance students' privacy rights with school safety concerns by explaining the agency's interpretations in plain language. The brochures also include contact information for obtaining additional assistance and guidance. More information, including press releases and guidance, is available online at http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/safeschools/.

Along with the brochures, the Secretary shared a handout on emergency management resources, including a variety of materials from the Department and partners across the federal government. More information is available online at http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/071030enc.html.

Meanwhile, in September, the Department's Family Policy Compliance Office issued its annual notification to states and school districts of their obligations under FERPA and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). PPRA gives parents and students over 18 certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing, and some physical exams. More information is available online at http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/.

Preventing the spread of MRSA

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has supplied schools and parents with a concise summary of
guidelines on how to prevent the spread of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA.

More information is available online at http://www.cdc.gov/Features/MRSAInSchools/.

**Educator Preparation & Recertification**

**Highly Qualified Bilingual Teachers, Special Education Teachers and Teachers in Small Rural Schools**

Districts with teachers granted a period of time to become highly qualified by filing ISBE form 77-36 “Request to Report Status of Bilingual Teacher, Special Education, and Rural School Teacher as Highly Qualified for NCLB Purposes” received an ISBE letter sent to the district approving the teachers for the assignment. The TSR highly qualified staff report has now been programmed to reflect this approval. We recommend that districts wishing to see the report showing the status of these personnel run the report again.

**Keep in mind:**

- Teachers with these approvals need not be reported as not highly qualified during the approval period allowed.
- The approval is valid only for the subject noted on the approval letter.
- The approval is valid only for the time period on the letter.
- The approval is subject to the requirements listed on the application set, including any professional development and mentoring requirements.
- At the end date of the approval, the teacher must be highly qualified in the subject.

With regard to other teachers:

- Teachers of all other core subjects who are not highly qualified may be employed, but they cannot remain permanently not highly qualified and must become highly qualified within the two years allowed in the state plan.
- The parents of children who are taught for four consecutive weeks by a not highly qualified teacher of core subjects in Title I schools or paid from Title I funds must be notified that their children’s teacher is not highly qualified.

**Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers**

The highly qualified staff report available on TSR may not accurately reflect the status of special education teachers. Concerns about the interpretation of IDEA and NCLB were not resolved in time to permit programming the system last fall. We are also working to complete this programming before the closing of the TSR and districts may wish to run the list again when we have completed the programming.

Special education teachers highly qualified requirements:

- Consultative: Not responsible for giving the grade; a full special education certificate or a special education endorsement obtained by passing the appropriate special education examination.
- Content: The teacher of record who gives the grade; a full special education certificate or a special education endorsement obtained by passing the appropriate special education examination and meets the NCLB demonstration of competence in each core subject taught.
- Persons who have a regular certificate and a special education approval or the Short Term Emergency certificate in special education do not meet the federal definition of highly qualified.

**Illinois Finance Authority**

**Short Term Tax Anticipation Program for Cook County**

The Illinois Finance Authority is offering limited 60-day bridge financing to qualified school districts, cities, villages and towns in Cook County. The program is designed as a user-friendly, cost-effective option to meet immediate cash flow shortfalls. Funds are expected to be available Thursday, November 29.

The Illinois State Board of Education is providing this information to districts at the request of IFA. ISBE has no role in determining eligibility.

The program establishes a line of credit extended by KeyBank, N.A., which will be used to purchase tax anticipation warrants or notes, with a term of 60 days. Subject to Bank and IFA approval and pursuant to State
law, participants would be permitted to draw-down up to 85% of the applicant’s second installment of the 2006 property tax levy payable 2007. An applicant must have a borrowing need of at least $100,000.

Participants will be required to adopt a resolution / ordinance to issue tax anticipation warrants or notes. Participants will pledge forthcoming property tax receipts as security for the anticipated debt.

A one-page application and comprehensive Q and A with timeline are available at the IFA web site at www.il-fa.com.

Teacher Resources

**National Excellence in Urban Education Award**

The National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST) is still accepting nomination applications for the National Excellence in Urban Education Award. The NCUST Excellence in Urban Education Award program was established exclusively to recognize public schools or public charter schools serving urban communities.

The goals of the NCUST Excellence in Urban Education awards program are to:

- Recognize the hard work, dedication, and talent of urban school educators and students;
- Educate the public about the accomplishments and potential of urban schools;
- Provide a concrete benchmark of excellence that motivates reform efforts; and
- Deepen the knowledge base of best practices for promoting urban school transformation.

More information, including criteria and the 2008 application, is available online at http://edweb.sdsu.edu/ncust. Applications are due Friday, November 30, 2007.

**Student Opportunities**

**2008 United States Young Aviation Artist Contest**

The American Society of Aviation Artists (ASAA) and the Brewer Trophy Aviation Education Association (BTAEAA) are now accepting entries for the 2008 United States Youth Aviation Artist Contest.

The theme of the 2009 program, “Design an Aviation Stamp,” focuses on all forms of sporting and recreational aviation, including:

- ballooning, gliding and parachuting;
- aerobatics;
- hang-gliding and paragliding;
- microlight and ultralight flying;
- model aircraft; and
- light aircraft and helicopter flying.

The deadline for entries is **February 29, 2008**. More information, including contest rules, can be found online at www.brewertrophy.org.

**Create-A-Greeting-Card Scholarship**

The Prudent Publishing Company and The Gallery Collection are sponsoring a Create-A-Greeting-Card Scholarship Contest for high school and college students. The grand prize is a $10,000 scholarship.

The contest deadline for entries is **January 15, 2008**. More information, including registration and rules, is available online at www.gallerycollection.com/scholarship.htm.

**Third Annual Illinois Work Zone Safety Calendar Contest**

In an effort to reduce work zone-related crashes in Illinois, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois State Board of Education, the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation (ATSSF) and the Illinois Chapter of the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) are sponsoring the 3rd Annual Illinois Work Zone Safety Calendar Contest for elementary students.

This year’s theme is “Keep Us Alive. Stay Alive. Drive 45.” Poster entries should reflect the student’s view of a work zone and what he or she may find in a work zone. The contest categories are K-1st Grade, 2nd-3rd Grade and 4th-6th Grade.

Each school must select the top four posters from each category (12 posters total) and submit them to IDOT by **December 14, 2007**.

For more information on the contest, please visit the contest website at http://www.dot-il.gov/trafficsafety/WZS/WZScontest.htm or contact Jessica Baker, IDOT’s contest coordinator 217-782-6518 or Jessica.baker@illinois.gov.
Employment Opportunities

**ISBE External Vacancy List**

An External Vacancy List for the Illinois State Board of Education is available at:
http://www.isbe.net/hr/Default.htm.

---

**In the News**

**Weekly news clips**

ISBE has posted highlights from last week’s education news clips at: